

# Empirical Investigation of the Impact of Organizational Culture on Human Resource Management

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## Abstract

*The study investigated empirically the impact of organizational culture on human resource management using the CUBS project (MSH/AFRICARE) in Nigeria as the case study. In order to achieve the research objectives, one research questions and hypotheses regarding organizational culture and human resource management were formulated. The study employed quantitative method. The case study organization was selected because the majority of studies conducted in Nigeria on similar or related topics were conducted on business or public organizations. It was in the light of the above that the present study opted for an NGO organization. The respondents of the study comprised the staff of CUBS and heads of civil service organizations (CSOs) who were recipients of CUBS funding across seven states in Nigeria. The outcome of the quantitative analysis reveals that organizational culture has a positive and significant impact on human resource management, and that organizational culture determines human resource management practice in the organization. The findings of this study have practical implications for organizational leaders, managers and employees, and their organizations, particularly NGOs in Nigeria, besides offering scope for further research in the area of organizational development*

**Keywords;** Organizational Culture and Human Resource Management

## 1.0 Introduction

Organization development is concerned with promoting the well-being of an organization, drawing together people from various aspects of life and to bringing desired success through the accomplishment of corporate goals and objectives (Ojo, 2009). In order to achieve their goals and objectives, people need to learn how to work together through identifying norms, values, artifacts, beliefs and rituals, and understanding the importance of organizational culture (Cascio, 2006). Ojo (2009) claims that the management of an organization needs to explain and imbibe its culture in employees to enable them to be familiarized with an organizational system (Ojo, 2009). During the process of explanation, an employee learns about the organizational culture and decides whether he can cope with it or not (Ojo, 2009). As each organization is a learning environment, the coordination of employees into learning the process is referred to as human resources management (HRM) practice (Cascio, 2006).

The HRM function includes a variety of activities, and key among them is deciding on the staffing needs, whether to use independent contractors or hire employees to fill these needs; recruiting and training the best employees; ensuring that the organization has a team of high performers; dealing with performance issues; and ensuring that personnel and management practices conform to various regulations (McNamara, 2005). HRM also includes managing the organization's approach towards employee benefits and compensation, as well as managing employee records and personnel policies (McNamara, 2005). Both organizational culture and human resource management work closely together to produce the shared outcome of employee's performance, which determines organizational success (Guest, 1987; Storey, 1992).

Despite the relationship between organizational culture, and human resource management as highlighted above, current research and seminar presentation reveals that their relationship is becoming more complex due to the divergent results arising from such studies (Aycan, Kanungo, Mendonca, Deller, Stahl & Kyrshid, 2000). Senyuçel (2009) argues that it has become difficult to come up with a commonly acceptable relationship between them. The findings are mostly inconclusive, which suggest further research, either in validating or contributing to the pool of knowledge (Shili, 2008).

Hence, the purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between organizational culture and human resource management by exploring both direct and indirect cultures. Organizational culture is not only able to guide behavior and change attitudes within the work environment, but also to give remarkable contributions by influencing behavior and attitudes towards satisfactory performance (Quinn, 1988).

### **1.1 Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture has proven to be very elusive because of the lack of a single definition that is generally accepted by all organizational culture literatures. One of the issues involving culture is that it is defined both in terms of its causes and effects (Shili, 2008). Organizational culture is a complex network of values and norms that guides an individual's behaviors. It involves a set of beliefs, values, assumptions and experience that are acquired through learning, socializing and sharing by members of social unit such as people in the organization (Rousseau, 1990) Almost all the definitions of culture emphasizes the organizational assumptions developed, nurtured and mentored consciously or unconsciously over organization's life cycle; these includes experiences, norms, values, philosophy and rituals that hold the organization together; its portrait, self-image, inner workings, interaction with the outside environment where some of the values are kept in written form while others are unwritten but yet adhered to strictly (Schein, 1984).

The culture of an organization is sometimes dynamic in nature, particularly after doing effective strength and weakness analysis, out of which can be eliminated and advantages retained and strengthened (Shumen, 2009). A valid organizational culture is called corporate culture (Shumen, 2009). Schein (1984) argues that we can describe "how" a group constructs its environment and which behavior patterns are discernible among the way it does its things. It is clear that organizational culture is a process that the organizational founders, top management and employees learn, socialize and adopt over time (Schein, 1984). It selects the best culture that suits the organization's objectives and that can be easily be accepted by wider environment (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Organizational culture is the normative glue that holds an organization together (Tichy, Fombrun & Devanna, 1982). Support by Schein (1990), in a more comprehensive fashion, argued that culture, as values and behaviors that are believed to lead to success and are thus taught to new members. Forehand and Gilmer (1964) suggest that culture is the set of characteristics that describe an organization and distinguish it from others.

Alvesson and Berg (1992) state that, organizational culture is a management tool that helps in work rationalization and efficiency thinking: an attempt to develop control mechanisms that are not based on compulsion or on direction. Parker (2000) argues that workers strive to get to command themselves or each other. The manager's task is considered to be the creation of a culture and its manipulation. The power of cultural theories is seen particularly in fields in which direct control and guidance mechanisms are difficult or impossible to maintain (Parker, 2000). Collins (1998) sums up the matter by stating that cultures are historically developed, socially maintained and individually interpreted. Every culture, however, has an in-built propensity to merge behavior, which happens by creating common norms and a shared social identity; such absolute behavior within a given organization is called corporate culture (Collins, 1998).

### **1.2 Human Resource Management**

Human resource management is a multidisciplinary organizational function that draws theories and ideas from various fields such as management, psychology, sociology and economics (Storey, 1992). Aimed at developing people through work (Bratton & Gold, 2001), human resource management includes administrative activities that are associated with planning, recruitment, selection, orientation, training, appraisal motivation and remuneration (Storey, 1992). Robbins and Judge (2009) sum up human resource management by five key concepts: motivating, disciplining, managing conflict, staffing and training.

Similarly, Storey (1992) describes the five functional areas of human resource management as staffing, rewards, employee development, and employee maintenance and employee relations. In addition, human resource management may be viewed as a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through strategy deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce (Storey, 1992) using an integrated array of cultural, structural and personal techniques (Senyucel, 2009). Likewise, Armstrong (1995) proposes human resource management as a strategic and rational approach to managing of organization's most valued assets, the employees who contribute to the achievement of their goals and objectives. In summary, human resource management involves all management decisions that influence the relationship between the organization and its employees (Gregory, Harris, Armenakis & Shook, 2009).

### **2.1 Organizational Culture and Human Resource Management**

Human resource management has an important role to play in organizational culture because it involves the people who work for the organization, who embrace and develop particular cultures within the organization; hence, any desired change to the culture of the organization has to be made through the people and by the people (Bae & Lawler, 2000). This implies that human resource management and organizational culture are linked to each other, and it will be appropriate to treat the constructs in like manner Human resource management policies, which are influenced by organizational culture, also significantly impact the employees. Human resource decisions are important because when an organization hires personnel that blend with their culture, these would enhance shared social knowledge between employees and organizational goals; such shared social knowledge guides employees in making the right decision when confronted with usual situations (Ouchi, 1983). A symbiotic relationship exists between HRM policies and organizational culture, wherein four human resource policy areas; staffing, training, compensation, and evaluation of employees, have significant effects on organizational culture (Earl, 2002). This symbiotic relationship is defined by three variables, namely management time constraints, management experience and market characteristics (Cooper, 1998 cited in Earl, 2002).

If, HRM practices are not in conformity with the organizational values shared by employees, then employees will feel unsatisfied, uncomfortable and uncommitted, thereby resulting in low performance because their values are different from the company's expectations (Earl, 2002). The relationship between organizational culture and human resources practices is such that when employees understand and internalize the organizational culture, this enables employees to choose the strategy and behavior that fit their personality as well as with the main routines of the organization's activities (Saffold, 1988). Research by Newman and Nollen (1996) concurs that organizational performance is better in companies where there is congruency between culture and human resources practice. As human resource management is responsible for recognizing the competitive advantages in corporate culture, an organization can differentiate itself from its competitors by attracting many excellent candidates (Kabanoff, 1991) and by selling itself as the best employer (Saffold, 1988).

According to Schein (2004), organizations do not achieve cultural change by accident, but they achieve it with a defined strategy for high involvement and a measurable action plan. Many link their strategy for high involvement to initiatives that are already taking place in the organization such as Total Quality Management or Total Service Quality (Schein, 2004). Aycaan et al. (2000) suggest that managing human resource in organization requires understanding of both the internal and external environments, in which the internal environment deals with internal work culture, whereas the external environment deals with institutional culture. Huang (2010) declares that leaders and leadership teams are the key elements that shape the culture of an organization. Several tools to mold organizational culture include effective communication, recognition, people development and communal identity building, amongst a host of others (Huang, 2010).

Fernandez (2010) argues that keeping culture intact entails a lot as those involved have to ensure that they stay true to winning values and traits: organization, appreciation for diversity, discipline, flexibility, honesty, friendliness, passion for learning and excellence, and a genuine concern for the welfare of all. Martins and Griffiths (2010) suggest that the management of an organization in the 21st century tends to be blinded by modern human resource science which offers an excessive of number of tools to help promote cultural change. Basically, bringing about organizational change should be simple: it is the organizations and their increasing complexity in modern day multicultural society that makes change more challenging, and that the keys to effecting cultural change are clear and consistent communication, a focused vision and a strong leadership that supports the vision (Martins & Griffiths, 2010).

Aycan et al. (2000) argue that because of the increasing demands of the globalized and reformed business organization, both researchers and professionals have started paying more interest to the study of culture as an explanatory variable. The researchers have also come to understand that the indiscriminate adaptation of strategy of human resource management practices and techniques evolved in the context of culture, Western cultural values may not be effective in other socio-cultural environments

### 3.1 Objective of the Study

This study would primarily evaluate organizational culture, its impact on human resource management a. specifically the study sought:

1. To describe the community-based support Project as to:
  - 1.1 Organizational culture
  - 1.2 Human Resource management
2. To examine the impact of organizational culture on human resource management

### 3.2 Research Question

1. What impact does organizational culture have on HRM?

### 3.3 Research Hypotheses

To answer the research questions and to achieve the objective of this study, the following hypotheses were proposed and tested:

**H1:** There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria

**H0:** There is no positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria

### 3.4 Research Methodology

A research method is simply a procedure for collecting data. The choice of research method reflects decisions about the type of instruments or techniques to be used (Richardson et al., 2009). Research methodology includes sampling design, data collection, data analysis, and limitations or constraints that the research faced (Schindler, 1998). Choosing the right research methodology depends on several criteria, such as the aim of the study, the type of information needed, the character of respondents, manipulation of independent variables, the degree of control that the researcher has over the case under study, and constraints of time and money (Sekaran, 2005). The procedures are discussed below.

### 3.5 Research Approach

The approach to this research incorporated quantitative method.. It is obvious that using the quantitative method is an acceptable methodology in the social sciences research (Saunders, 2009). Westbrook (1994) suggests that quantitative, approaches provide the most complete or insightful understanding of the problem. In the same vein, Margolis (1987) argues that the criterion for accepting knowledge claims is not adherence to a particular method, but evidence in the knowledge generating process.

### 3.6 Research design

The research for this study was based on a cross-sectional design because the data on all the relevant variables was collected at one time, the study followed the cross-sectional design approach, and the methods and procedures comprised descriptive research (O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner, 1989). The cross-sectional design approach is particularly suited for research that either involves the gathering of information about people's attitudes and behavior or that answers questions across a variety of settings (Richardson et al., 2009).

A research design provides a conceptual framework for the study (Zikmund, 2003) and offers a framework for the collection and analysis of data, as the choice of research design reflects decisions about priorities given to the dimensions of the research process (Sekaran, 2005).

Research design guides the researcher on what questions to study, what data are relevant, what data to collect and how to analyze the results (Richardson et al., 2009), how questions will be answered throughout the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting research observations (Saunders, 2009). Furthermore, research design covers strategic decisions concerning the choice of data collection methods, and more tactical decisions regarding measurement and scaling procedures, questionnaires, samples, and data analysis (Richardson et al., 2009). The study undertaken the used of qualitative approach featured a self-administered survey where questionnaires were emailed to all respondents to respond and email back.

Secondary data was retrieved from reports and journals, including the CUBS annual report, 2010, to help define the nature of the problem (Zikmund, 2003). On the other hand, a self-administered questionnaire was used for the quantitative research to avoid interviewer bias; otherwise the personality of the interviewer may result in response bias (Saunders, 2009). The survey approach is also useful in suggesting a reason for the relationship between the variables investigated, which in this case are organizational culture and HRM

In summary the research constituted descriptive research. Research that is primarily descriptive is designed to describe instead of explaining a set of conditions or characteristics of people in a population, based on the measurement of its sample (Zikmund, 2003).

**3.6.1 Reliability**

Reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and therefore yield consistent results (Zikmund, 2003). The internal consistency method was used in this study to examine the reliability of the questionnaire. The internal consistency is determined by examining the inter-correlation of each item using the most popular test of interim consistency reliability that is the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Sekaran, 2003).

Table of Overall Cronbach’s Alpha for the Scale

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	43	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	43	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

  

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.885	35

From Table, the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.885 indicates the high reliability of the questionnaire.

Table Reliability statistics for Organizational Culture subscale

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	43	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	43	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

  

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.943	10

The value of Cronbach’s alpha in Table, for the Organizational Culture subscale is 0.943, which is indicative of a high reliability.

Table of Reliability statistics for HRM subscale

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	43	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	43	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.626	12

Table, shows the Cronbach’s alpha value to be 0.626 for the HRM subscale. The value depicts a reasonably reliable subscale.

**4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis**

**4.1 Respondents’ Profile**

The respondents’ profile was analyzed using frequency analysis method to examine the demographic information of respondents from the CUBS project, MSH Nigeria. Nominal data comprising age, gender, working experience and educational level are presented in Table 5.1 as follows:

Table of Respondents’ Profiles

Demographic Information	Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Age group	20-29 yrs	8	19
	30-39 yrs	17	39
	40-49 yrs	12	28
	50 yrs and above	6	14
Gender	Male	24	56
	Female	19	44
Working experience	1-5 yrs	28	65
	6-10 yrs	14	33
	11-20 yrs	1	2
Educational level	PhD	4	9
	Masters	22	51
	Bachelor	12	28
	Others	5	12

The respondents’ profile shown above indicates that 43 respondents were distributed across different age groups. Eight respondents which represented 18.6 percent were within the age of 20-29 years, 17 respondents which represented 39.5 percent were within the age group of 30-39 years, 12 respondents representing 27.9 percent were within the age range of 40-49 years, and finally six respondents representing 13.9 percent were within the age group of 50 years and above.

The gender spread had 28 male and 19 female respondents representing 55.8 percent and 44.2 percent respectively.

Twenty-eight respondents or 65.1 percent had 1-5 years of working experience with the organization under study, while 14 respondents or 32.6 percent had worked for 6-10 years, and only one respondent or 2.3 percent had worked for 11-20 years.

The respondents' educational level indicated that four respondents or 9.3 percent held a PhD, 22 respondents or 51.2 percent held a Master's degree, 12 respondents or 27.9 percent held a Bachelor's degree, and five respondents or 11.6 percent were holders of different qualifications lower than a Bachelor's degree.

Table of Survey response

Description	Quantity	No of respondents
No of questionnaires administered	43	43
No of questionnaires filled and returned	43	43
Responses rate	43/43x100=100%	

## 4.2 Empirical Findings

### Research Objective 1.1

*To describe the community-based support project as to: Organizational Culture.*

The findings of the research were derived from both the quantitative studies. In the former, a ten-item survey pertaining to organizational culture was conducted on the sample. The findings demonstrate that the organizational culture in the CUBS project is one that invests in the welfare of its human resources, where great priority is placed in strengthening its HRM practice management system, which promotes organizational success. Such a system ensures that all employees are treated justly in terms of policies and practice. The results imply that organizational culture is a predictor of human resources management.

### Research Objective 1.2

*To describe the community-based support project as to: Human Resource Management.*

To be able to describe HRM practice within the CUBS project, twelve items in the questionnaire were related to HRM. Responses to the HRM survey questions by the sample, of the CUBS project, concur that HRM relies on organizational culture to be able to function effectively. The findings also imply that poor human resource management practice will have an adverse effect on organizational performance.

### Research Objective 2

*To examine the impact of organizational culture on human resource management and employee's performance.*

To achieve this objective, the researcher investigated the following:

(a) The impact of organizational culture on HRM;

To address (a) the impact of organizational culture on HRM, the following hypotheses was submitted:

*H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.*

*H0: There is no positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.*

A correlation analysis was performed to find out whether there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Table shows the results of the correlation analysis.

Table of Correlation between Organizational Culture and Human Resource Management

Group	Number of Respondents	Computed mean (x)	Computed r	p-value	Decision
Organizational culture	43	2.05	0.974	0.000	H1 is accepted.
Human resource management	43	2.09			

Table, shows that the computed value of the correlation coefficient r is 0.974, at the 0.01 level of significance. This implies that the result is highly significant, therefore H1 is accepted, i.e. there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource in the CUBS project, Nigeria.

In addition, regression analysis was also conducted to further investigate the impact of organizational culture on HRM.

Table, Regression analysis for impact of Organizational Culture on Human Resource Management

R= 0.974 R <sup>2</sup> = 0.949 Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.948 Std Error of estimate = 0.09134						
		ANOVA				
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	6.377	1	6.377	764.313	0.000	Significant
Residual	0.342	41	0.008			
Total	6.719	42				

p<0.05

Table, shows that the F-value is 764.313 and p=0.000. This shows that organizational culture has a significant impact on human resource management. The table also shows that organizational culture has a simple regression (R) of 0.974 with human resources management, and this accounted for 94.9% of the variance in human resources management (R<sup>2</sup>=0.948), which is very substantial. The remaining unaccounted variance (5.1%) is due to other factor(s) not considered in this study that also have a causal effect on human resource management. The results indicate that organizational culture is a predictor of human resources management. In conclusion, H1 is accepted.

**4.3 Summary of Quantitative Findings**

The findings from quantitative analysis may be summarized in Table below.

Table of Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Results
H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H1 was accepted.</li> </ul>
H0: There is no positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H0 was rejected.</li> </ul>

**5.0 Conclusion**

With all the research objectives addressed and the two research questions resolved through both qualitative and quantitative analyses, the present study has been successfully fulfilled. The conclusions of the study are summarized in the following paragraphs:

*Research Question 1: What impact does organization culture have on human resource management and employee’s performance?*

The outcome of data analysis was a computed f-value of 20.185 with a p-value of 0.000 whereas the level of significance used in the analysis was 0.05. Thus the result led to the acceptance that organizational culture has a significant impact on human resource management. This finding concurs with that of Deshpandé, and Farley, (2004) who attest that culture can influence employee motivation; employee morale and goodwill; productivity and efficiency; the quality of work; innovation and creativity and the attitude of employees at the workplace. Similarly, Denison’s (1990) research indicates that organizational culture influences organizational performance directly.

An organization whose organizational culture is propagated extensively and profoundly, and practiced in management decision, enjoys much better repayments in terms of investment and sale than organizations that do not popularize organizational culture. Therefore, studies prove that cultural factors can lead to the realization of a lot of the organization’s value achievements, and it may be the extreme crucial factor for the success of organizations (Denison, 1990).



Later research on organizational culture has gradually developed culture into a more macroscopic organizational aspect Deshpandé, and Farley, (2004) In short, research has shown a close connection between organizational culture and organizational performance at least (Deshpandé, and Farley, 2004)

The following t hypotheses were tested to investigate the relationships between organizational cultures, human resource management.

*H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.*

*H0: There is no positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and human resource management in the CUBS Project in Nigeria.*

The computed value of the correlation coefficient  $r$  was 0.0974, at the 0.01 level of significance, while the  $p$ -value was 0.000. Based on these results, H1 was accepted. Hence, it may be concluded that there is a positive relationship between organizational culture and human resource in the CUBS project, Nigeria. This conclusion is supported by the findings of another study by Gifford, Zammuto and Goodman (2002). In that study, Gifford et al. (2002) investigated the relationship between hospital unit culture and nurses' quality of work life within seven different hospitals located in five Western United States cities. Their data analysis showed that unit organizational culture did affect the nurse's quality of work life, and that human relation cultural values were positively related to organizational culture.

The findings stress the need to monitor organizational culture and to evolve better HRM practices so that good employee's performance is consistently maintained at an optimal level. In other words, these findings have potential practical implications for managers and consultants of management development programs. The findings could also form the basis for prescribed action to drive good human resource management practice through a positive organizational culture that contributes to higher employee's performance in the organization.

### **5.1 Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommendations for the stakeholders of organizations concerned.

(a) Create a unique culture.

Each organization should work towards creating its own unique culture instead of copying another organization's culture. While inspiration and ideas may be drawn from other organizations, culture cannot be borrowed wholesale from a specific organization. Instead, the right cultural elements must be selected, blended and fine-tuned over time to fulfill the unique requirements of one's organization. However, although culture differs from one organization to the other, the same culture must be shared among fellow employees within the same organization in order to synergize and achieve common goals and vision effectively. The creation of culture need not come from the top, but it could also come from the grassroots. Therefore, organizations must get all employees and other stakeholders involved in culture creation, whether formally or informally. An example of how this may be executed is by engaging employees in reflecting upon their company core values, work processes and best practices during team building sessions, training programs or company retreats.

(b) Link organizational culture to HRM practice

Some leaders extol a certain culture, but yet when it comes to incentives, employees who practice the extolled culture are not recognized for their efforts, simply because the organization's HRM function does not have a system in place. Instead, organizations should consciously map key cultural elements to their HRM function to motivate employees to partake in the culture that the management has endorsed. This may be achieved by customizing an existing HR system in the market.

(c) Leaders must adequately mentor their staff on organizational culture.

For organizations that are already getting their managers or leaders to mentor subordinates, they should also ensure that the managers or leaders deal specifically with organizational culture, and mentor their staff according to the intentions of certain cultural practices especially those that the staff find hard to comprehend or appreciate. This may be done, for example, during formal coaching or mentoring sessions, or during orientation programs for not only new employees of the organization, but also to employees who are joining a new department

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